

U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**FIFTEEN DEFENDANTS INDICTED FOR MONEY LAUNDERING
AND DRUG TRAFFICKING**

Acting United States Attorney Anthony J. Jenkins announced today the unsealing of a multiple count indictment which was returned by a federal grand jury on May 5, 2005 against fifteen defendants, charging them with money laundering and drug trafficking. The defendants are identified as follows:

Christopher Alfred	Age: 30	Residence: Frederiksted, St. Croix, V.I.
Shango Allick	23	Frederiksted, St. Croix, V.I.
Leigh Bennett	23	Sayre, PA.
Sheryl Carr	26	Frederiksted, St. Croix, V.I.
Isilee Dozier	27	Clarksville, TN
Isaiah Fawkes	25	Frederiksted, St. Croix, V.I.
Marcelino Garcia	26	Frederiksted, St. Croix, V.I.
Jamaal Maragh	23	Frederiksted, St. Croix, V.I.
Roberta Newton	25	Frederiksted, St. Croix, V.I.
Myron Punter	29	Clarksville, TN
Jimmie Rainer, Jr.	26	Fairbanks, AK
Shelly Stringer	38	Fort Riley, KS
Carolyn Urgent	36	Frederiksted, St. Croix, V.I.
Tonisha Wade	24	Fairbanks, AK
Jamal Young	23	Frederiksted, St. Croix, V.I.

The Indictment alleges that from approximately June 2001, until May 2005, the defendants conspired to conduct financial transactions affecting interstate commerce using property which in fact involved the proceeds of illegal drug trafficking, with the intent to promote the carrying on of the drug trafficking, and knowing that the transactions were designed in whole or in part to conceal and disguise the nature, the location, the source, the ownership and the control of the proceeds of the drug trafficking, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1956(a)(1)(A)(i) and 1956(a)(1)(B)(i). The Indictment also alleges that the defendants conspired to possess with intent to distribute narcotics, namely five (5) kilograms or more of cocaine, a Schedule II narcotic drug controlled substance, fifty (50) grams or more of cocaine base, which is commonly referred to as “crack,” a Schedule II narcotic drug controlled substance, and less than fifty (50) kilograms of marijuana, a Schedule I narcotic drug controlled substance, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1), 841(b)(1)(A) and 841(b)(1)(D).

Essentially, the indictment alleges that the investigation led to the discovery of a drug trafficking organization operating in Fairbanks, Alaska, supplied with narcotics from the U.S. Virgin Islands. Cocaine, crack cocaine and marijuana were sent, usually via Express Mail parcels, from St. Croix to Fairbanks. Members of the organization in Alaska then distributed the narcotics in Alaska for significant financial profit. Some of the illegal drug proceeds were then sent back to St. Croix, via Western Union wire transfers and money orders. Defendants and others were recruited to either send the money transfers to St. Croix or to receive the transfers in St. Croix. The government uncovered documentation showing that at least 167 wire transfers and money orders were sent between St. Croix and Fairbanks, for an approximate total value of \$385,000.00.

The drug trafficking charge carries a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment of ten years, and a maximum of life, along with a five million dollar fine. The money laundering charge carries a maximum term of imprisonment of twenty years, and a \$500,000.00 fine. The indictment alleges that the government intends to forfeit all property, real and personal, involved in the offenses, and any property that is traceable to the violations.

Attorney Jenkins thanked Rodney Bensen, Special Agent-in-Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Seattle Division, Jerome Harris, Special Agent-in-Charge, DEA's Caribbean Division, and Brian Wempling, Special Agent-in-Charge, Internal Revenue Service, for their hard work in successfully investigating and bringing this case to fruition, without incident. He also expressed his appreciation to Commissioner Elton Lewis, Virgin Islands Police Department, U.S. Marshal Conrad Hoover, the Fairbanks Alaska Police Department, and the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Division for their assistance in the investigation. Gene Hawk, the Resident Agent in Charge of DEA, St. Croix has provided audio commenting on the case. The audio can be accessed by dialing 1-888-557-6494, and then dialing mailbox number 708.

Attorney Jenkins emphasized that the Indictment is merely a formal charge, and all defendants are presumed innocent unless and until guilt is established at trial.